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## Gov. Gary Locke Praises Recommendations in Sustainability Report

Gov. Gary Locke lauded the findings of the Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel he created last September. Members of the panel presented their report to the governor at a meeting in his office.

The Governor's Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel is composed of 25 representatives from the public and private sectors. Their goal is to find ways of using human, environmental and economic resources more wisely, including the use of energy-efficient products, recycled materials and conservation programs.

The advisory panel spent a year developing a roadmap for the state to ensure vibrant communities, a strong and stable economy, and the protection of natural resources. They have agreed on a vision of achieving a fully sustainable state within one generation—by 2030.

"I am extremely impressed with the work of the sustainability panel," Locke said. "The report outlines some disturbing trends, but recommends practical, realistic short- and long-term actions we could take to reverse course and arrive at a sustainable Washington."

In its report titled "A New Path Forward: Action Plan

for a Sustainable Washington," the panel highlights 11 priority recommendations to Washington state. The recommendations target economic vitality, tax policy, natural resource protection and state government performance.

The recommendations include:

- Investing in clean energy and establishing clean energy standards.
- Committing to greenhouse gas reduction targets and mitigation strategies.
- Adopting industry-sponsored "green building" standards for all new state government construction projects.
- Engaging and informing citizens on sustainability.
- Defining, documenting and communicating the vision and progress of sustainability efforts.

Panel members explained that a successful sustainability strategy will entail participation by the executive branch of state government, the Legislature, the private sector and the public. The panel anticipates broad



distribution of its report to draw attention to its concerns and proposals.

"We addressed solutions to current problems and speak to the shared hope of sustaining the quality of life that is special to the Northwest," said Bradley Smith, co-chair of the Governor's Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel. "We suggested nothing other than the most effective means to ensure a legacy we can leave for our children and the future generations of our state."

In September 2002, Locke signed an executive order directing state agencies to establish sustainability objectives and plans to modify their practices. The executive order also established the advisory council. To view their report, visit their Web site at

<http://sustainableseattle.org/sustpanel/ANewPathForwardActionPlan.pdf>

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# Seattle Mayor Offers Plan to Boost Recycling Rate

*Enhanced programs designed to support 60 percent goal.*



*The new recycling programs in the Mayor's plan include a ban on recyclable paper in commercial garbage that would be phased in over the next three years.*

In late January, Mayor Greg Nickels unveiled his plan to improve the citywide recycling rate by expanding existing programs, adding a food waste collection program, and phasing in a ban on paper in the garbage.

The new plan is designed to support the city's goal of recycling 60 percent of all the waste generated and to reverse a two-year decline in the recycling rate. The 2001 recycling rate in Seattle was 38 percent, a drop of two percentage points from the previous year.

"We are a community that cares intensely about the environment. I expect citizens will respond positively, as they have in the past, to the new and enhanced recycling programs that are part of this plan," said Nickels. "It's good for the environment and for citizens."

The decline in the overall recycling rate last year was due to an almost five percent drop in commercial recycling. The commercial rate declined due to a decrease in corrugated paper, mixed paper and newspaper recycled.

Residential recycling rates increased slightly in 2001. Single-family homes recycled 57 percent of the waste they generated and multifamily homes (apartments and condominiums) increased their recycling rate by four

percentage points to 22 percent.

The new recycling programs in the Mayor's plan include a ban on recyclable paper in commercial garbage that would be phased in over the next three years.

Other elements of the plan include food waste collection for composting for businesses, expansion of the curbside recycling program to all businesses, and a ban on recyclable materials in residential garbage.

"The typical resident pays the same amount now as they did in 1994 for garbage collection due, in part, to the commitment of residents to reduce waste by recycling," said Nickels. "Recycling in Seattle has saved tens of millions of dollars in waste disposal costs since our program started in 1988. When you add the economic benefit to the environmental benefit, it's a powerful equation."

Estimates are that 47,000 tons of recyclable materials, or more than one-third of Seattle's waste, were left in the garbage in 2001. If those items had been recycled instead it would have saved \$1.5 million in disposal costs. Paper represents nearly two-thirds of the recyclables still left in the waste stream.

## Terry Husseman Sustainable School Awards Program – Winners for 2002-2003

The results are in and 14 schools will be sharing \$25,000 in Sustainable School Awards!

**Seed Award-\$2,500 each:** Blue Ridge Elementary, Walla Walla School District; Meridian High School, Meridian School District; Heritage High School, Evergreen School District; Glacier Park Elementary, Tahoma School District.

**Environmental Curriculum-\$1,500:** Republic Elementary School, Republic School District.

**Sustainable School-\$1,500 each:** Lincoln Options Elementary, Olympia School District; Robert S. Lince Elementary, Selah School District; Green Park Elementary, Walla Walla School District; Harmony Elementary, Mount Baker School District; Mount Baker Junior/Senior High, Mount Baker School District; Acme Elementary, Mount Baker School District; Kendall Elementary, Mount Baker School District; Crestwood Elementary, Kent School District; Komachin Middle School, North Thurston School District.

For more information, contact Michelle Payne, School Awards Coordinator, [mdav461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:mdav461@ecy.wa.gov) or 360-407-6129, or visit the School Awards Web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/terryhusseman.html>.

## Vancouver “Garbage Guy” Travels to Russia



*On a trip in the country one day, we naturally wanted to start by seeing some key solid waste facilities.*



For Rich's many more words and pictures about his trip, visit

[http://www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/garbage\\_guy.htm](http://www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/garbage_guy.htm).

The City of Vancouver and the City of Khabarovsk, Russia, both benefited from an exchange of ideas for recycling and solid waste management as Rich McConaghy, the City of Vancouver's Solid Waste Program Manager, traveled to this city of 600,000 people located on the Amur River in southeastern Russia. McConaghy left on Tuesday, March 25, and returned on Monday, April 7. He kept a diary of his trip, and here are some excerpts.

On Saturday morning [March 29], I met with some members of the Khabarovsk Krai Chapter of the Russian Nature Protection Society, including (from left to right in the picture) Rimma, Vladimir, Victor, (Rich), Valentina, and Olga (interpreter) to discuss the results of their recent efforts on a recycling project. They have worked with volunteers to continue operating 11 recycling depots that serve 12,800 residents living in a high-rise community of 48 separate buildings. They have just developed a new

curriculum, including a manual that school children will use and guide/lesson plans that their teachers will use on the topic of recycling and waste management. Competition is very great among upper elementary children to get into the after-school recycling program and they have had great success in doing regular art, fashion and other creative contests using reclaimed materials.

Another day, I had an opportunity to chat at length with a gentleman named Ilya from Ulan-Ude, which is a significant sized city about 130 km from Lake Baikal. The lack of an effective infrastructure or programs to handle waste and to recover recyclables is an issue in his area as it is in Khabarovsk and many other places in the Russian Federation. Ilya, who has a background in soil science, explained that they are doing some composting in his city. We discussed and debated carbon-nitrogen ratios at length and it sounds as though they use chicken manure as the primary nutrient source and

woody brush as the primary carbon feedstock. They have only four or five months when the climate allows them to obtain good composting action; however, they do successfully use a large static pile that provides fairly good insulation for material at the center of the pile during seasons when the temperature is very low. They must still aerate the pile frequently through active mixing and this does slow down the time it takes to make a quality compost.

On a trip in the country one day, we naturally wanted to start by seeing some key solid waste facilities. We visited a large warehouse that is full of paper bales for recycling. During the Soviet era, this facility was apparently handling a large volume of paper. After the Soviet Union dissolved, the building fell into disuse. Now, however, the facility is handling about the same amount of material that it handled in the past and it can handle much more as they make plans for implementing increased collection of residential recyclables.

### The 2003 GOVERNOR's AWARD for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices

Each year the Governor of Washington presents the Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices. This award goes to organizations and businesses that have shown leadership in preventing pollution and moving toward sustainability while accomplishing their own objectives. The 2003 Applications are ready, and the application deadline is June 6. You can download the application in two versions:

Adobe Acrobat at <http://ecy-hqapp10/Sustainability/GovAward/application2003.pdf> or

Microsoft Word at <http://ecy-hqapp10/Sustainability/GovAward/application2003.doc>.

(The MS Word Version will allow you to type directly in the document, which you can then submit by electronic mail or post.) You can find out more on-line at [http://ecy-hqapp10/Sustainability/GovAward/gov\\_awards.htm](http://ecy-hqapp10/Sustainability/GovAward/gov_awards.htm). For further information, contact Mariann Cook Andrews at the Department of Ecology 360-407-6740 or [e-mail maco461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:maco461@ecy.wa.gov).



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# What's Been Happening with the Beyond Waste Project

For a couple of years, Ecology's hazardous waste and solid waste program staffs have been engaged in a joint planning effort called the Beyond Waste Project. Statewide plans for both hazardous waste and solid waste will be updated as a result of this joint effort.

Moving "beyond waste" means that we will shift from emphasizing proper management of wastes to focusing on eliminating wastes and toxic substances wherever possible over time. Phasing out as much waste as we can will make our state's economy, natural environment, and overall society healthier for the long term.

The actions being recommended for the next several years of the project cover ways to reduce materials and substances that eventually end up as waste, improve tracking of wastes and materials, make energy- and resource-efficient building practices mainstream, eliminate selected industrial wastes and toxic substances, reduce or eliminate household and small business hazardous wastes, reduce the generation of organic waste materials and establish a collection and reuse cycle for organic materials.

Recommendations are also being developed regarding the existing solid waste management system. They include a long-term strategy for addressing pollution from closed and abandoned landfills, options for funding local government programs without relying on disposal volumes, and clarifying roles, authorities and responsibilities.

Over the coming months, there will be a series of involvement events designed to tap the expertise of businesses, local governments, the environmental community and other citizens. The agency will be gathering feedback on a number of potential recommendations and ideas for moving "beyond waste," including (but not limited to):

1. A series of meetings by a group that includes members of the State Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) scheduled for late May through June.
2. A survey involving businesses that are affected by the Hazardous Waste Plan, scheduled for the month of June.
3. State SWAC consideration and discussion of potential recommendations.
4. Focus groups with businesses, anticipated for August-September.
5. Public meetings, anticipated for Fall 2003, to review the potential plan recommendations, as revised by the stakeholder events listed above.
6. Public review of the draft plans in Winter 2003-Spring 2004.

For more information, call Cheryl Smith at 360-407-6654, Chris Chapman at 360-407-7160, or visit the website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste>.

## Calendar of Events

**May 30-June 1, 2003, Building Local Living Economies conference**, Portland State University. Call Derek Long at 360-303-7776 or email: [Derek@LivingEconomies.org](mailto:Derek@LivingEconomies.org), OR call Michelle Long at 360-303-7779 or email: [Michelle@LivingEconomies.org](mailto:Michelle@LivingEconomies.org) OR <http://www.livingeconomies.org/balle/viewPage.cfm?pagelid=535> for details.

**May 29-31, 2003**, the Sustainability Forum will take place in Portland. Contact Sustainable Northwest at 503-222-7041 or visit the Forum Web site at <http://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/soc/sfindex.htm>.

**June 4-6, 2003, 29th Annual Waste Reduction Conference** and Annual General Meeting of the Recycling Council of British Columbia will be take place in Penticton, BC. For details, contact the Council at 604-683-6009, Ext 314, or visit their Web site at <http://www.rcbc.bc.ca/>.

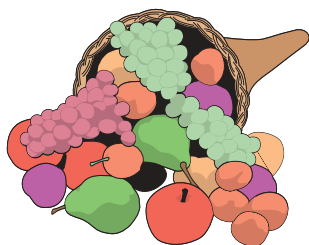
**June 20-21, 2003, "Recycling: Framing the Future,"** the Association of Oregon Recyclers' 25th Annual Recycling Conference & Trade Show, preceded by their Annual Education Conference on June 19, both in Eugene. For more information, contact the AOR at 503-661-4475 or visit their Web site at <http://www.aorr.org/>.

**June 20-23, 2003, "Enough for All: Sustainable Living in a Global World"** environmental justice conference presented at Seattle University. For more information, contact Cassandra Carmichael, 80 Charles Street, Annapolis, MD 21401, or email [cassandra@toad.net](mailto:cassandra@toad.net) or visit [www.webofcreation.org/ncc/conference/](http://www.webofcreation.org/ncc/conference/).

**July 11-20: Creating a World that Works for All: Courage and Vision in Hard Times**, a workshop led by Joanna Macy and Sharif Abdullah, put on by the Whidbey Institute in association with Schumacher College. To register, contact Whidbey Institute at 360-341-1884 or by e-mail at [whidinst@whidbey.com](mailto:whidinst@whidbey.com), or visit their Web Site at [www.whidbeyinstitute.org](http://www.whidbeyinstitute.org).

# From Waste-to-Worth

Jay Shepard, Sustainability Strategist



## Suggested Reading:

*The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices: Practical Advice from the Union of Concerned Scientists*  
by Michael Brower and Warren Leon

*Fast Food Nation*  
by Eric Schlosser

*Diet for a Small Planet (20th Anniversary Edition)*  
by Frances Moore Lappe

*Hope's Edge: The Next Diet for a Small Planet*  
by Frances Moore Lappe and Anna Lappe

## The real issue isn't plastic or paper, it's what's inside that bag.

What we purchase has a greater environmental impact than the bag we put it in. By choosing organically grown products, for example, we are contributing to a reduction in the use of pesticides. By choosing to purchase locally grown foods, organic or not, transporting costs are reduced, thereby reducing fossil fuel consumption and air pollution. The added benefit is keeping dollars in the local economy a little longer. By choosing poultry or vegetable protein rather than beef or pork, we reduce land impacts and improve water quality.

You might think, "Well, it's on the shelf anyway. Someone is going to buy it." Someone probably will. If that someone is not you, you have reduced the demand for that product. Left on the shelf, the need to replace it is reduced.

And, by buying a product that has fewer environmental impacts, you help create the demand for those types of products.

Never underestimate your power and influence. Your purchasing choices send a powerful message to food growers and distributors.

When you shop, ask for what you want, and pay attention to what you get. If your market doesn't provide what you are asking for, there will be another down the street that will.

Here is a look at what we Washingtonians purchased in 2000 (in tons):

Meat, Poultry and Fish	575,856
Dairy	1,701,043
Fats and Oils	187,728
Fruit	838,144
Vegetables	1,231,871
Nuts	23,871
Flour and Cereals	574,677
Caloric Sweeteners	457,089
Spices	8,841
Cocoa	12,967
Coffee	35,365
Tea	12,378

TOTAL 5,659,830  
(Extrapolated from data provided by the USDA)

Waste composition studies have shown that we throw away about 14% of what we buy. That's another good reason to pay attention to what goes into that bag. There is a lot of waste that is simply spoiled food: whole loaves of bread or full bags of potatoes, for example.

So, my recommendations are:

1. Buy what you plan to consume and use what you buy.
2. Buy organically grown foods, help create and sustain the market for these Earth friendly foods.
3. Choose locally grown foods.
4. Reduce meat consumption.

For more on this issue, see books listed at left, or visit Union of Concerned Scientists Web page on Sustainable Agriculture [http://www.ucsusa.org/food\\_and\\_environment/sustainable\\_agriculture/index.cfm?pageID=11](http://www.ucsusa.org/food_and_environment/sustainable_agriculture/index.cfm?pageID=11).



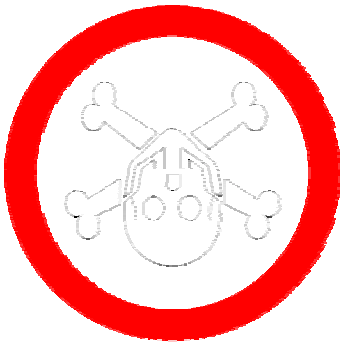
## Newly Available: A Field Guide on Sustainability.

The Department of Ecology's Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program has recently published this introduction to sustainability concepts and a framework for decision making: What is "Sustainability"?; the Emerging Consensus for Sustainability; Why should Washington State Adopt a Sustainable Vision?; the Sustainability Checklist. It is available on-line at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0304005.html>, or from Ecology's Publications Office at 360-407-7472.

# Turning Guilt on Its Head

*Is It the Label or the Price Tag?*

*This is  
A Rock  
and a Hard Place:  
a quarterly  
something-to-think-about  
column from the editor*



*Consumers avoid  
guilt by choosing  
products whose  
packaging doesn't  
bring up  
environmental issues.*

When we go shopping, we see shelves full of “normal” products, and a scattering of specially labeled “green” products. We can usually see that the product is “green” from several feet away. The theory is that the positive aspects of buying green will draw customers towards the products labeled as such.

After decades of green marketing, most consumers seem determined not to think about the negative consequences of being a “normal” consumer. In high-consuming areas of the world, only about 5% of consumers are responding to the call for more sustainable lifestyles. So, that theory didn't save the earth—at least not to the extent that it has been used.

The United Nations Environmental Programme is currently proposing that we need to make even louder appeals to people's desire to do good things for the environment. According to UNEP, consumers aren't responding to messages that appeal to guilt, messages about the negative environmental consequences of popular products. However, those messages are not always noticeable from several feet away.

What if the green products were normal and had no special labels? What if special labels instead

identified products that contained unfriendly ingredients or that were produced in environmentally unfriendly ways? And I don't mean the fine-print ingredient lists or the little box that says “Danger”; I mean big black letters that announce **“This Stuff Is Nasty!”** Would consumer trends change for the better?

One theory is that the current green labeling approach—despite its ostensibly positive tone—actually does appeal to guilt. Consumers avoid guilt by choosing products whose packaging doesn't bring up environmental issues. But if the labels were turned, those consumers who wanted to avoid guilt would shun the special—in this case negative—labels. They would drift towards environmentally silent green products, and be green without even realizing it.

This new approach has an appeal, and might work to some extent. But let's also consider that a good chunk of consumers think more about their budgets. These consumers may or may not care about guilt. For instance, I occasionally—but rarely—see organic oranges selling for a cheaper price than the “normal” version. More often, the organic oranges are more expensive—at times even twice the price. When it gets to that point, I'll save a little money and suffer a little guilt.

Though I'm only one consumer, and not statistically significant, the general belief that money is a major motivation in our lives is based on general observations. Efforts to switch labeling practices might be slightly effective, but they would probably be much more effective if accompanied by efforts to incorporate the true cost of environmental degradation into the price of currently “normal” products.

## Washington State Mercury Chemical Action Plan Issued

This plan, published jointly by the Departments of Ecology and Health, describes a campaign to virtually eliminate the use and release of human-caused mercury in Washington State. Currently, about 3,800 to 5,000 pounds of mercury are released into the state's environment each year from human sources. By focusing on better waste disposal, management, and recycling, mercury pollution can be greatly reduced.

The report is available on-line at  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0303001.html>.

# Hello, Biodiesel . . . so Bye-Bye, Diesel

The Olympia Biodiesel Collective - by Rupert Wild



*" . . . when we said the word biodiesel, people just stared back with a big question mark in their eyes."*



*Though biodiesel use requires no modification to cars newer than 1992\*, one modification was made to this 2002 VW TDI.*

\*Natural rubber hoses used in most older cars are rotting away from the use of petro diesel. Biodiesel just seems to speed up that deterioration process.

Last September, I joined a small group of like minds from wildly varying backgrounds at a small class on how to turn waste vegetable oil into a fuel that will power a diesel vehicle. As the vegetable oil conversion process (transesterification) was demonstrated and explained to us, we all wondered why this alternative fuel isn't more widespread and more available. We wondered why we had not heard the word biodiesel more often and why, later, when we said the word biodiesel, people just stared back with a big question mark in their eyes.

An idea was born with that pondering. The idea was to start meeting every Sunday to discuss what we'd learned about biodiesel, through research, through our own experiences using biodiesel, and through our interactions with others using biodiesel. We could also act as a resource for people in our community that wanted answers to the question: "What is biodiesel?" And thus was created The Olympia Biodiesel Collective, a grass roots effort to help spread the word about this alternative fuel.

As we started to meet, we recognized three areas of focus. Having just learned how to make biodiesel, we saw the homebrew potential of biodiesel. Typically, home-based transesterification involves the use of conical-bottom drums with a heating element and stirring device. The vegetable oil is heated and filtered to remove any food particles. Methanol and lye are mixed at a ratio of about 20% methanol and 1% lye to 79% warm veggie oil. (Methanol and lye require particular attention to safety when handling.) After an hour or two of mixing, the whole thing sits overnight. The glycerin drops to the bottom and what's left on top is biodiesel.

Not everyone has room for a home refinery; however, so small-scale production has limitations. Large-scale production and resale of biodiesel has been successful, and this fuel has for

some time been tested and recognized by the EPA as an alternative fuel. It has received its own ASTM rating, ASTM D6751. There was, however, only one location in Olympia where people could buy biodiesel. So our second area of focus would be to encourage additional outlets to the public. Competition could bring us a more palatable price per gallon.

Thirdly, with a lack of awareness among diesel owners and gasoline owners alike, we decided the last area of focus would be education. The Collective prepared materials to familiarize people with an alternative to putting fossil diesel into their diesel vehicles. In support of biodiesel, we furnished information regarding decreased emissions, improved lubrication properties, and domestic production of the only fuel that is as biodegradable as sugar and 10 times less toxic than table salt.

The group still meets every Sunday and is currently involved with supporting the four biodiesel bills that have currently passed the House and are going through the Senate, SHB 1240, 1241, 1242 and 1243. We have established within the group the infrastructure to buy biodiesel in bulk and distribute it amongst ourselves. As we continue, we look at encouraging more retail outlets in Olympia and the possibility of finding someone to turn Tumwater's soon-to-be-vacated Miller Brewery into a biodiesel production facility.

## To find out more:

The Olympia Biodiesel Collective meets every Sunday from 7-8pm at 816 Adams Street next to the Timberland Library in downtown Olympia. For more information contact

[olympia\\_biodiesel@yahoo.com](mailto:olympia_biodiesel@yahoo.com)

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If you see news happening, or if you make news yourself, please let us know. You can submit articles or notices to the editor by regular mail or by e-mail.

We eagerly await your news.

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